

Message Text

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FM AMEMBASSY RABAT

TO SECSTATE WASHDC 9552

C O N F I D E N T I A L RABAT 4536

FOR S/AM AND NEA ONLY

FOR ASST. SECRETARIES MCCLOSKEY AND ATHERTON

E.O. 11652: GDS

TAGS: MARR, MO, SP, US

SUBJECT: US-SPANISH TREATY INTERPRETATIONS AND THE NORTHERN ENCLAVES

REF: A) STATE 125512, B) MADRID 4958

1. I HAVE JUST LEARNED THAT THE DEPARTMENT HAS COMMITTED THE US TO AN INTERPRETATION OF OUR BILATERAL TREATY WITH SPAIN INVOLVING THE TICKLISH QUESTION OF CEUTA AND MELILLA, SPAIN'S NORTHERN ENCLAVES ON MOROCCAN'S MEDITERRANEAN COAST. THERE APPEARS TO BE AGREEMENT TO INCLUDE THE ENCLAVES IN THE "AREA OF OUR COMMON INTEREST" IN THE CONTEXT OF THE TREATY. DEPENDING ON WHAT THIS MEANS, IT COULD WELL POSE POTENTIAL BILATERAL PROBLEMS HERE. MOROCCO'S RECENT IMPROVEMENT OF RELATIONS WITH SPAIN AND CURRENT PREOCCUPATION WITH THE SAHAR

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AND OTHER FACTORS SUCH AS HASSAN'S RELUCTANCE TO CREATE DIFFICULTIES FOR JUAN CARLOS IN SPAIN'S POST-FRANCO EVOLUTION, HAVE RELEGATED THE THE ENCLAVES TO THE BACK BURNER. THE ISSUE, HOWEVER, IS STILL THERE, AND HASSAN IS PUBLICLY COMMITTED TO THE EVENTUAL RETURN OF THESE ENCLAVES TO MOROCCO. IF KNOWLEDGE OF A US UNDERTAKING TO CONCERT WITH THE SPANISH ON CEUTA AND MELILLA BECOMES KNOWN, THE NEGATIVE EFFECT ON OUR INCREASINGLY PRODUCTIVE RELATIONS WITH MOROCCO COULD BE CONSIDERABLE.

2. IN VIEW OF THE FOREGOING, COULD YOU LET ME KNOW THE EXTENT OF OUR COMMITMENT TO SPAIN?

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ANDERSON

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